

## JLCA Corner

### The 3rd International Conference on EcoBalance

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The 3rd International Conference on EcoBalance was held at Tsukuba Research Center of The Agency of Industrial Science and Technology. The theme was "Progress in LCA for a Sustainable Society".

Total of 428 person attended, including 76 from 23 countries beside Japan as shown in Table 1, and 138 papers were reported.

Table 1

Attendance	Persons
Europe	38
Asia	30
USA & Canada	4
Africa	2
Australia	2
Japan	352

LCA research in Japan has been booming for years and several interesting features can be identified in this meeting as a result of the evolving LCA studies which particularly developed after the 2nd conference.

(1) In contrast to prevailing theoretical studies already performed, a large number of case studies from raw material

manufacturers, assembling manufacturers and recycling activities were reported increasingly at this conference.

- (2) To be mentioned especially, eight presentations from agriculture and food industries were presented from Japanese researchers. This is good evidence that LCA studies are spreading into wide varieties of industries in practice and that the data from these different industrial applications are steadily accumulating.
- (3) As for impact assessment in LCA studies, Japan was said to be somewhat behind Europe. But, even in this field, concrete case studies were reported concerned with electric power, automobile and other industries.

In the panel discussion, which finalized the conference, the chairman, Prof. Dr. Itaru YASUI of the University of Tokyo, concluded the discussion as follows:

LCA methodology should be reasonably streamlined to be understandable and useful as a communication tool for consumers attempting to resolve environmental issues.

The panelists and audience in the hall were asked to answer a question of "Where we LCA researchers are and which way should we go?" The majority of the answers is shown by the direction of the arrow in Figure 1.

